

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions:

1. (Currently Amended) A tampon comprising an absorbent material and a composition disposed in said absorbent material, the composition having:

at least one antibacterial agent in an amount of ~~about 0.01 wt.% to about 5 wt. %~~ about 0.10 wt% to about 2.5 wt% of the total weight of the tampon, wherein said at least one antibacterial agent comprises a mixture of alkyl dimethyl benzylammonium chloride and alkyl dimethyl ethylbenzylammonium chloride; and

at least one finishing agent in an amount of ~~about 0.01 wt.% to about 10 wt.%~~ 2.5 wt% of the total weight of the tampon, wherein said at least one finishing agent comprises one or more polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters,

wherein ~~the~~said composition has synergistic antibacterial properties effective to neutralize the production of TSST-1 toxin and reduce Staphylococcus aureus bacteria growth.

2 - 6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) The tampon of claim ~~6~~1, wherein said at least one antibacterial agent is ~~one or more quaternary ammonium compounds are present in~~ an amount of about 1.0 wt.% based on the total weight of the tampon.

8 - 18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously presented) The tampon of claim 1, wherein said composition further comprises one or more additional components selected from the group

consisting of: preservative, deodorant, fragrance, malodor counteractant material, humectant, and any combinations thereof.

20. (Previously presented) A method of inhibiting the production of TSST-1 toxin by exposing TSST-1 toxin-producing *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria to a tampon, the tampon having an absorbent material and a composition, the composition comprising:

at least one antibacterial agent in an amount of about 0.10 wt% to about 2.5 wt% ~~about 0.01 wt.% to about 5 wt.%~~ of the total weight of the tampon, wherein said at least one antibacterial agent comprises a mixture of alkyl dimethyl benzylammonium chloride and alkyl dimethyl ethylbenzylammonium chloride; and

at least one finishing agent in an amount of about 2.5 wt% ~~0.01 wt.% to about 5 wt.%~~ of the total weight of the tampon, wherein said at least one finishing agent comprises one or more polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters;

wherein the said composition has synergistic antibacterial properties effective to neutralize the production of TSST-1 toxin and reduce *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria growth.

21 - 26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~25~~20, wherein said at least one antibacterial agent is ~~one or more quaternary ammonium compounds~~ are present in an amount of about 1.0 wt.% based on the total weight of the tampon.

28 - 37. (Canceled).

38. (Currently amended) The method of claim 20, wherein said composition further comprises one or more additional components selected from the group consisting of: preservative, deodorant, fragrance, malodor counteractant material, humectant, and any combinations thereof.